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NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

COMMISSION ON BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES AND EDUCATION

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We appreciate your thinking of the National Research Council (NRC) in terms of evaluating your remote viewing studies. As you know, we did a very thorough look at a number of paranormal phenomena in a study entitled Enhancing Human Performance, Issues Theories and Techniques published by the National Academy Press in 1988.

One section of that report was entitled "Scientific Assessment of Remote Viewing" beginning on p. 178. The report reviewed the major studies and concluded:

"In summary, after approximately 15 years of claims and sometimes bitter controversy, the literature on remote viewing has managed to produce only one possibly successful experiment that is not seriously flawed in its methodology - and that one experiment provides only marginal evidence for the existence of ESP. By both scientific and parapsychological standards, then, the case for remote viewing is not just very weak, but virtually nonexistent. It seems that the preeminent position that remote viewing occupies in the minds of many proponents results from the highly exaggerated claims made for the early experiments, as well as the subjectively compelling, but illusory, correspondences that experimenters and participants find between components of the descriptions and the target sites."

The comparative advantage of the NRC is in evaluating a field of research. To put the machinery of the NRC committee process into place for the evaluation of a limited set of studies does not seem warranted so soon after the last report. What I hope is that our recent report will be helpful in guiding your own assessment of remote viewing studies.

Please let me know if I can be of help.

Sincerely,


Barbara Boyle Torrey

cc: John Swets
Sandy Wigdor
Dan Druckman